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Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 226710

LIMDIS TOKYO FOR HENOCH

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MNUC, TW

SUBJECT: PEACEFUL NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH THE ROC

REF: TAIPEI 6054

1. THE STATUS OF VARIOUS MAJOR ISSUES RELATED TO OUR PEACEFUL NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH THE ROC WHICH ARE PENDING IN THE DEPARTMENT IS SUMMARIZED BELOW FOR YOUR INFORMATION.

A. TAIPOWER REACTORS 5 AND 6: A REQUEST FROM THE NRC FOR AN EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITION ON ISSUANCE OF AN EXPORT LICENSE COVERING TAIPOWER REACTORS 5 AND 6 HAS BEEN PENDING WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT SINCE FEBRUARY 1976. ALTHOUGH THE DEPARTMENT HAS REQUESTED THE VIEWS OF OTHER EXECUTIVE BRANCH AGENCIES ON THIS PROPOSED EXPORT, RESPONSES HAVE NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED FROM ALL AGENCIES CONCERNED AND, THUS, THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITION HAS

NOT BEEN SENT TO THE NRC.

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B. FUEL FOR TSINGHUA'S THOR REACTOR: AN NRC REQUEST FOR AN EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITION ON ISSUANCE OF EXPORT LICENSE FOR REPLACEMENT FUEL RODS CONTAINING 70 PERCENT REACTOR HAS BEEN PENDING SINCE JUNE 1975. AS THERE WAS ENRICHED URANIUM FOR FUELING TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY'S THOR REACTOR HAS BEEN PENDING SINCE JUNE 1975. AS THERE WAS DISAGREEMENT WITHIN EXECUTIVE BRANCH CONCERNING APPROVAL OF THE EXPORT OF 70 PERCENT ENRICHED FUEL TO TAIWAN LAST YEAR, STATE (OES) RAISED WITH ROC EMBASSY AND GENERAL ATOMIC (THE FABRICATOR/APPLICANT) THE POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING 20 PERCENT ENRICHED URANIUM FUEL INSTEAD. UPON RECEIPT OF AN INDICATION FROM THE ROC EMBASSY THAT TSINGHUA WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT SUCH LOW ENRICHED FUEL RODS ON AN INTERIM BASIS, THE DEPARTMENT ON JULY 27 REQUESTED THE VIEWS OF OTHER CONCERNED EXECUTIVE AGENCIES ON SUCH A MODIFIED EXPORT REQUEST, BUT RESPONSES HAVE NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED FROM ALL AGENCIES CONTACTED.

C. 2.5 KG PLUTONIUM: THE US FIRM TRANSNUCLEAR APPLIED TO NRC THIS MONTH FOR AN EXPORT LICENSE FOR 2.5 KG OF PLUTONIUM TO BE USED FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH PURPOSES AT INER'S MIXED-OXIDE FUEL FABRICATION LABORATORY. THE DEPARTMENT IS NOT PREPARED TO TAKE ANY ACTION TO COORDINATE AN EXECUTIVE BRANCH POSITION ON THIS PROPOSED EXPORT AT THIS TIME.

D. SAFEGUARDABILITY DETERMINATION ON INER'S REPROCESSING LABORATORY: THE ROC'S REQUEST FOR A SAFEGUARDABILITY DETERMINATION HAS BEEN PENDING SINCE OCTOBER 1975. (REF: STATE 213296, 220625 AND 224790).

E. ARGONAUT TRAINING REACTOR: TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY OBTAINED AN ARGONAUT TRAINING REACTOR ON A LOAN BASIS FROM ERDA'S ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY UNDER A FIVE-YEAR AGREEMENT SIGNED IN THE FALL OF 1972. THE AGREEMENT FORESAW THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE TRAINING REACTOR MIGHT BE TURNED OVER TO TSINGHUA AT THE END OF THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, AND ERDA HAS ASKED FOR THE DEPT'S APPROVAL
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TO DO THIS. THE DEPARTMENT HAS THIS REQUEST UNDER CONSIDERATION.

2. EACH OF THESE ISSUES FACES A NORMALLY TIME-CONSUMING CLEARANCE PROCESS, AND THE DEPT DOES NOT INTEND TO PRESS ANY OF THESE ISSUES TO A CONCLUSION UNTIL OUR PRESENT UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT ROC INTENTIONS IN THE REPROCESSING FIELD HAVE BEEN RESOLVED. WE ARE NOT

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AWARE OF ANY PRESSURE FROM THE ROC FOR AN EARLY DECI-
SION ON THESE ISSUES. ROBINSON

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